

Submission
No 201

INQUIRY INTO HOME SCHOOLING

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Sophie Fox

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL HOME SCHOOLING INQUIRY

I was home educated from preschool right up to year 10. When I was 16, I was accepted into a Certificate IV in Laboratory Techniques at TAFE, NSW. By 17, I had graduated TAFE with a distinction. This year, while my peers are sitting the HSC, I have been accepted and enrolled into a Bachelor of Arts with a Bachelor of Science at University.

With home education, for children who are bright, they are able to go ahead at their own pace, and they are able to excel. My brother, who is two years older than me, graduated university at age 18, and since then has been employed full-time. I have a friend who graduated from university at age 18 with excellent results, and now, at 19 is employed by Google. I have other friends who were home educated and are currently studying at UNI, even though friends our age are still at school. I know first-hand that home education works.

I love that the parents in the home school group know how to talk with me as an equal. I never feel like they look down on me because I am young.

The most important thing home educated children learn is how to learn. My brother is a very good friend, and I have three amazing little sisters, aged 13, 11, and a cute little 7. My sisters are three little blessings in my life, and I hope they can have the same brilliant education my mum has been able to give to me. We enjoyed going on lots of excursions, and doing lots of practical work. I always fully understood my work by the time I was finished with it.

I have never personally stepped foot in a school classroom within school hours, but over the years I have seen people come into homeschool because of awful experiences they have had to endure at school, being bullied for no valid reason. The schools overlook the majority of these cases; the teachers have up to 30 children in each class, how can they pay special attention to one. Education should be about catering for each individual child's needs – not going with the norm, pushing the children with lower IQs and telling the smart kids that they have to stay back where all the other kids are at. Schools claim that they can give this special education to all the kids, but it is a fact that cannot be overlooked. For some children the school systems work, but home education needs to be an openly available alternative.

Because parents are always with home educated children, they are safe, and well cared for. The government should support home educators.

Regards

Sophie Fox